

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 335 915

FL 019 404

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TITLE Stories in Conversation.
PUB DATE 91
NOTE 22p.; In: Kansas Working Papers in Linguistics, 1991, vl6; see FL 019 402.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Interpersonal Communication; *Language Patterns; Language Research; Linguistic Theory; *Narration; *Story Telling; Structural Analysis (Linguistics)
IDENTIFIERS *Conversation

ABSTRACT

Although conversational stories within one individual's corpus share the same structure, they have features that set them apart from one another. Based on the stories' general characteristics and the way they function in ongoing talk, they can be identified as: (1) durable personal experience narratives (PENs), which are often repeated during the narrator's lifetime; (2) disposable PENs, told only once or twice with the structure of a narrative, then forgotten; and (3) news stories, about events current in the narrator's life. PENs are told in the first person; news stories may be told in the first or third person. Durable PENs develop a stable pattern and are recalled as a complete unit. Disposable stories never develop a pattern, are characterized by many hesitations, and many include unnecessary details. All story types overlap to some degree. Durable PENs are generally preceded by an abstract or preface, but disposable stories have no preface and therefore no easy transition from conversation to narrative. News stories may have abstracts that change speech events from conversation to narrative, but the abstract fits into the conversation differently and may be very abrupt. A structural analysis of a durable PEN, transcription guide, and brief bibliography are appended. (MSE)

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STORIES IN CONVERSATION

Roberta Senner Hofer

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Abstract: Because conversational stories can be used for different purposes, they enter conversations in different ways. Sometimes they have a preface, sometimes not; sometimes a story fits smoothly into the ongoing talk, but other times it changes the topic. Observations such as these led me to the formulation of three major types of stories in conversation. While they share the same overall structure, each type has distinctive features. The features and story entry variations are described in this paper.

Because of different conversational styles, some people tell more stories than others (Tannen 1984: 30-31), and my husband Rod is one of those people. As a way of learning more about stories and how they work in conversation, I decided to record conversations in which my husband was a participant and then to analyze the stories he told. Studying the narratives of a single storyteller eliminated the need to consider variations in style; furthermore, my relationship to the narrator put me in the best position to judge the relative stability of the stories in his repertoire. Although he told his friends that my motivation in conducting this study was revenge for having to listen to him for so many years, my real interest was simply to find out how he always managed to get his stories, especially his favorite ones, into a conversation.

Using Labov and Waletzky's (1967) analysis of narrative structure as a way of defining narratives, I found many segments of conversation that could be defined as complete narratives. According to Labov and Waletzky (1967), a fully developed narrative has as many as six elements. First, it has an orientation, that is, all the background information that the audience needs to understand why or how the events occurred; next, it has complicating action, a series of event clauses that lead up to the main event, or the result, of the narrative. At the same time, the narrator also adds an evaluation to help the audience understand why he is telling the story and whether he thinks it is funny, scary, disgusting, etc. Polanyi (1985: 14) writes that evaluations are a way of 'assigning prominence' to a story, of making one part of the text stand out from

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other parts. The evaluation by the narrator frequently occurs just prior to the main event, but other forms of evaluation may be scattered throughout the narrative. Many evaluations also come from the audience, although Labov and Waletzky did not include any audience responses in their data.

In addition to these elements, at the beginning of a story the narrative sometimes starts with an abstract, which is a brief summary of the story in one or two clauses. Finally, at the end of a story, the teller signals to the audience that the narrative has finished by adding a coda which concludes the action of the story and returns the audience to the present time (Labov & Waletzky 1967: 39).

Labov and Waletzky's concern in their original publication was to find the very simplest form of narrative; thus, they chose to study 'oral versions of personal experiences' (1967: 12). Furthermore, they distinguished between 'expert story tellers' and ordinary people; they chose to study oral versions of personal experiences because they are 'not the product of expert story tellers that have been re-told many times, but the original productions of a representative sample of the population' (Labov & Waletzky 1967: 12). They further stated that a story by a reputed storyteller possesses 'formal features which set it aside from others' (Labov & Waletzky 1967: 43). The very fact that they made these distinctions is evidence that Labov and Waletzky recognized differences in stories.

In this paper I demonstrate that within the corpus of one individual's stories there are also features which set one apart from another, even though they share the same overall structure. Based upon differences in their general characteristics and the way the stories function in the ongoing talk, I have identified three types of stories in conversation: (1) durable personal experience narratives (PENs), (2) disposable PENs, and (3) news stories. Following a description of features common to the different story types, I will discuss in greater detail how each type of story enters a conversation.

General Features

First, as implied by their names, durable PENs are lasting, often repeated stories. They are the teller's favorite stories and are a part of his/her permanent

repertoire. Some of the stories in my data, for example, The Wolf Spider and New Year's Eve, are 15-20 years old, although I collected the data within the last two years. While durable PENS may be inactive for long periods of time, they can easily be recalled because they are repeated many times throughout the narrator's lifetime.

This is not true of disposable PENS, which are are told only once or twice with the structure of a narrative but then are forgotten by the narrator. Sandra Stahl, who writes about personal narratives as folklore, writes only about those I have called durable PENS, but she recognizes that others exist. Stahl writes that 'a person may relate an incident in conversation in the pattern of a personal narrative but never again repeat the story nor even remember that he has created the story at all' (1977a: 38).

Because these are stories of personal experience, both types of PENS are generally told in the first person. The teller is one of the main characters in the story or at least a witness to the events. In a few cases they may be about someone for whom the narrator has great empathy. Nevertheless, they must be true stories and, therefore, they do not include family legends that cannot be verified by the teller or gossip to which there is not a witness.

Unlike either type of PEN, news stories must be about events that are current in the narrator's life. News stories may also be told in first person, but frequently they are told in third person. In my data these stories include a wider circle of friends with whom the narrator has recently been in contact. The two examples in this paper, The Shattered Windshield and Meeting with the Boss, are both about people Rod works with, and his own involvement is peripheral. News stories may either last, or they may be forgotten like disposable PENS. If they last, they become durable PENS, but in that case they may also need to be personalized in some way.

As a result of their frequent repetition, durable PENS develop a stable pattern. With these narratives the teller repeats the story very much the same way every time, even repeating entire sentence patterns, although he may tailor some details to fit a particular audience or situation. The story is recalled as a complete unit and becomes so familiar to the narrator that he may be able to take liberties with the basic

structure. For instance, in my data I have one story in which Rod put the final event before the orientation (See Figure 1, Appendix I). This is a technique which can be used very effectively if the teller knows the story well, and it is one of the features which Labov and Waletzky (1967: 43) cited as the mark of an experienced storyteller.

In contrast, disposable stories never develop a pattern. Indeed, they are characterized by many hesitations and may include unnecessary details. This can be seen most clearly in this excerpt from a disposable story.

Excerpt from Archie's Asthma Attack.

5. /
6. /
7. R: (clears throat) I and Archie McLane went to
uh
8. we're going out to the prebid walkthrough at
West Shore School District in
Pennsylvania
9. I used to live in West Shore School District
when we were uh uhh
10. B: In Harrisburg.
11. R: (quietly) Harrisburg.
12. C: (unintelligible)
13. R: (We're doing an abatement there.)
14. (louder) First of all we set the record for
being in an airplane that's not flying.
15. The Hall-Kimbrell record for that it's six
and a half hours.
16. B: What do you mean?
17. C: O:h!
18. R: That's where you sit=
19. C: On the runway or something?
I
20. R: at--on the runway at O'Hare
21. C: Ahh.
22. R: Until the last possible connecting flight
has left and then they take you back to
the=
23. C: Right.
24. R: gate and cancel the flight.
25. C: M hmm.
26. R: Which they quickly reirs--instituted for
some reason.
27. Anyway.
28. We end up
29. in Harrisburg

30. C: I
 31. R: (quietly) I don't think I can tell you.
 32. /
 33. R: Uh we end up in uh
 34. Harrisburg
 35. at
 36. 11:30 at night something like that and the

In this story in which Archie's asthma attack saved Rod and Archie from oversleeping, the information about setting a record for being on a grounded airplane (lines 14-15) is completely extraneous to the point of the story. Furthermore, when the narrator attempted to return to the story (lines 27-29), the audience was more interested in continuing the airplane discussion (line 30). After answering the question about the airline (line 31), the narrator did go on with the story, but very slowly and deliberately, pausing, and using *uh* to fill space. All of these features indicate that the teller is unrehearsed and unsure of himself.

If a news story is repeated frequently, it develops a stable pattern and becomes a durable PEN. However, news stories are initially told with characteristics of disposable stories such as hesitations and false starts. The beginning of The Shattered Windshield provides evidence of this in lines 22 and 23, when the narrator starts a sentence, then stops midway and starts over again.

Excerpt from The Shattered Windshield

17. /
 18. /
 19. B: When did Edwardo and Sam come?
 20. R: Well Edwardo after they replaced the windshield in his airplane (no falling intonation)
 21. B: How did that happen?
 22. R: (faster tempo) They were uh uh OK he's flying from LA to New York and they land in Kansas City and take off again.
 23. On landing in Kansas City the airplane comes in and the nose doesn't--they don't turn the nose down. It's going down on the runway like this. (hand gesture showing angle)
 24. B: mmmm
 25. R: So the pilot
 26. had to make the decision to take off again or

force the nose down. (slaps hand down on table)

27. B: mmmm

28. R: And he forced the nose down (slaps table) 'n it shattered the windshield.

29. B: Whoa.

Different types of stories are also used for different purposes. Durable PENS are primarily used to entertain, regardless of the point they may add to a conversation, or whether they are designed to amuse, shock or amaze the audience. In The Wolf Spider, for example, although the narrator began and ended with an explanation of the living habits of wolf spiders (lines 7-9 and 54-57), he was far more intent on making the audience laugh than on giving any serious explanation. Bracketing the story with these brief explanations gave him a legitimate excuse to tell the story, which he then made as entertaining as possible, using many evaluative devices such as imitative voices, reported speech, increased volume, loaded words, etc.

Excerpt from The Wolf Spider

1. J: My day is going fine.
2. I had Tom kill the biggest spider I have e:ver seen.
3. R: Big and hairy?
4. J: Have you
5. Have you had any spider trouble this year?
6. R: No.
7. But if it's big and hairy it's probably a wolf spider
8. which come in in the fall.
9. They come in from outside.
10. Scared the living daylights out of Berta when we lived in a place.
11. J: A wolf spider?
12. R: Wolf spider. I uh
13. I'd gone to bed and here's this blood curdling scream from the kitchen.
14. J: (laughs)
15. B: (laughs)
16. R: And she's out there standing on the table=
17. B: It wasn't that blood curdling.
18. R: She's out there standing on the table and I was sure she was being raped.
19. J: (laughs)

20. B: (laughs)
 21. R: She's standing on the table going (raises pitch) spider spider spider
 22. J: (laughing) Oh Roberta
 23. B: (laughing) I was.
 24. I was.
 25. You should have seen it Jess. It was huge. It was covered=
 26. J: Are they like (gestures with hand to show size)
 27. R: Not that--quite that big. I mean this was
 28. I mean he was about that size (hand gesture) but he's hairy.
 29. He's very hairy.
 I
 30. J: Does that include legs?
 31. R: Yeah yeah.
 32. B: That makes it like an animal.
 33. If its hairy.
 34. J: (laughs)
 35. R: So uh
 36. uh
 I got a mason jar and a broom and it ran up the wall
 37. J: What time of night was this?
 I
 38. R: and got it
 39. Huh?
 40. J: What time of night was this?
 41. B: Oh it was--it was after midnight.
 I
 42. R: This was after midnight.
 43. And captured it in a mason jar and took it up to KU the next morning
 44. and went to a Dr. Beers.
 45. I think that's what his name was.
 46. He was the spider man at KU.
 47. And he goes oh
 48. / (pauses to look at imaginary jar)
 49. Scared your wife didn't it
 50. And I go how'd you know?
 51. And he goes
 52. Does it all the time this time of year
 53. J: (laughs)
 54. R: And its a wolf spider and they live
 55. They don't build a web but they live outside and very often they'll come in
 56. The most common way of coming in is when people go out and dig vegetables before the winter
 57. and they'll end up with a wolf spider being in

the vegetables and then it comes out once
it's in the house

When a narrator tells a durable PEN, it can be a performance. Everybody involved is aware of the act of storytelling and the narrator is in the lead. Disposable stories, on the other hand, are told much less consciously than durable PENs; as Stahl (1977a: 38) wrote, the teller may not even remember that he created a story. They are very likely to be used to fill a gap in a conversation, as the Archie story did. Disposable PENs may also be used as a quick illustration of a point that is difficult to explain otherwise. While all stories illustrate a point in some way, disposable PENs are invented for this purpose at the moment they are needed.

News stories are again different because their main purpose is to inform the audience of current events which the teller finds newsworthy. At the same time, the teller does not simply report all the day's events but selects those he thinks the audience will find most interesting. Even though each story type has a different primary purpose, they all overlap to some degree. The teller adds some evaluation to a news story, for instance, so news stories may also amuse, shock, amaze, or otherwise entertain. Likewise, a durable PEN may sometimes fill a gap in conversation, etc.

Because durable PENs have a stable pattern, they are versatile. Unlike disposable stories, which are created to fit a specific situation, durable PENs can be used in any number of situations to make a point or even different points. Rod has a story about forgetting the Lord's Prayer which he might use as an excuse not to be a group leader or as a way of explaining how he could also forget someone's name. This versatility exemplifies what Katherine Galloway Young (1987) calls the difference between the point of a story and the point of the telling. The point of the story is related to the events in the story, while the point of telling the story pertains to 'the relationship between the story and the occasion on which it is told' (Young 1987: 54). Durable and disposable PENs have a point in telling; they are always related to the ongoing conversation. News stories have a point, but they do not have a point in telling beyond their currency. This last characteristic can be seen more clearly when considering the entry of each story type into a

conversation.

Before considering different means of story entry, however, it is important to understand the nature of turn-taking in conversation as described by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson in their 1974 paper, "A Simplest Systematics for the Organization of Turn-Taking for Conversation." According to Sacks, et.al., conversation is democratically arranged around utterance turns. The basic principle is that each participant is equally entitled to take a turn. As one speaker completes an utterance, other participants feel obligated or entitled to take their own turn in speaking (Sacks and Schegloff 1974: 236). Sacks (1972) also writes, 'If a speech event is going to take more than one sentence to complete, speakers must get permission to take an extended turn, or risk being interrupted on completion of the first sentence' (cited in Young 1987: 38). Since by definition stories consist of at least two or three clauses, they take more than one utterance to complete, and, therefore, some adjustment of the turn-taking routine must take place (Sacks 1970, cited in Young 1987: 158). This is why the narrator must in some way signal to other participants in the conversation that he needs an extended turn. To do so he gives a story preface, which is defined by Sacks (1970) as 'an utterance that asks for the right to produce extended talk and says that the talk will be interesting' (cited in Young 1985: 38).

Sacks (1970, cited in Young 1985: 38) also suggests that it is up to other participants to indicate whether or not they are interested and to give permission to the storyteller, or, in other words, to indicate that they are willing to give up their turns while he tells a story. While listeners are prevented from taking any extended turns at talk themselves or from changing the subject, other utterances may be useful contributions to the story. The narrator depends on responses of the audience to help shape the story and to know whether they're following. These token responses keep up the pattern of turn-taking without interrupting the storyteller.

While Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson wrote about turn-taking in conversation, John Wilson (1989: 3) claims that they never 'actually proposed a theory of conversation which might explain what it is about this type of talk that makes it a speech event in its own right.' In his book, On the Boundaries of Conversation (1989), Wilson defines conversation as 'a speech event

in which an effort is made to maintain an equality of speaker rights' (1989: 55). Having an equality of speaker rights means 'that any individual has an equal right (within conversation) to initiate talk, interrupt, respond, or refuse to do any of these things' (Wilson 1989: 20). In other speech events, such as narratives, there are more constraints on the rights of an individual, as previously mentioned. They may not take an extended turn after one person begins a story, and they are expected to ask questions or comment on the story, but they may not refuse to respond at all or initiate another topic without appearing to be rude.

While speech events such as narratives supplement the flow of conversation, they are different from conversation as defined by Wilson's speaking rights theory. Conversation and narratives are separate speech events. Wilson writes that talk in any context moves in and out of conversation, and participants move from one speech event type to another by means of out-modes. Out-modes are utterances that 'change the status, or definition, of the developing speech event' (Wilson 1989: 56). Conversationally tied out-modes maintain the equal status of participants as they introduce conversationally related speech events such as jokes, narratives, banter, and so forth.

Story Entry

Each type of story enters--or interrupts--a conversation differently. First, durable PENs are almost always preceded by an abstract or preface. Because a durable PEN is a relatively self-contained item, the teller is not only aware that he needs to take a longer turn than normally acceptable, but also that he needs to carefully situate the story in the conversation. Sacks (1970) writes that stories 'must seem to arise naturally from the ongoing talk lest the storyteller seem to want to dominate the interaction unduly' (cited in Polanyi 1985: 34). With durable PENs the story not only arises from the conversation, but the storyteller may go to great lengths to find an opening or to create one, even changing the direction of the conversation to do so. He wants to tell the story, but he must also be sure that it will be interpreted as he intends.

Jefferson (1979 cited in Polanyi 1985: 34) calls the talk leading up to the story, including the preface and its acceptance by other participants, entrance talk. The entrance talk preceding a durable PEN may be much

more involved than before other stories. Through the entrance talk the teller not only notifies the audience that he will tell a story, but also relates the story to the previous conversation. Because the storyteller must create a bridge from conversation to durable PEN, he may even need to make several attempts before he is successful. Thus, the first abstract or preface may actually occur much earlier in the conversation than the complete story.

The conversation preceding New Years Eve is an example of how a storyteller can manipulate a conversation in order to tell a story. First, as we were talking with our friend Jan, Rod indirectly brought up a topic (line 3) that would inevitably lead to stories, the anniversary of the two of us being reunited in Yugoslavia after a long off-and-on relationship.

1. B: Isn't that funny that he's never been to North Dakota?
2. I've been to North Dakota.
3. R: Did you tell her did you tell her did you tell her?
4. B: Did I tell her what?
5. That it's nineteen years?
6. That this is our anniversary
- I
7. Nineteen years together
8. J: Oh oh I knew it yesterday I knew that
9. B: Did I say that yesterday?
10. J: Yes congratulations
- I
11. R: Nineteen years ago today she came to her senses.
12. J: Yeah? (laughing)
- I
13. B: That's Rod's--that's Rod's version of the story it wasn't quite that way.

Asking me whether I had told her made him seem more modest, but still obligated her to show interest in the occasion (lines 8, 10, 12). A bit later in the conversation, he then gave an abstract of a story of mine (lines 36-43) which he ended with a preface to his own story (line 46).

35. R: I found you a job.
36. lined you up with that=
37. B: That nice guy.
38. R: That nice guy who then chased you around the=
39. J: (laughs)

40. R: I
The kitchen table
41. for two hours
42. J: (laughs)
I
43. R: Til you locked yourself in your room.
44. B: (laughing) Haven't we told you that story?
45. I was=
I
46. R: You knew I'd be there any minute.

Because I was in the room when Rod started my story, he was forced to yield the floor and allow me to tell it myself. This is referred to by Young as the rule of entitlement; that is, the person who experienced the event has priority in the retelling (1985: 180). While I was telling my story, Rod, in fact, left the room. Upon his return, when Jan included him in the conversation again (line 50), he made a second attempt to tell his story by repeating a variation of the same preface (lines 56-58).

49. J: What a guy huh?
50. You found this job?
51. R: (unintelligible)
52. B: Yeah, he found it--this was the great job he found me.
53. J: (unintelligible question)
54. B: Just stayed in that
55. bedroom then until Rod came.
56. R: u:h
57. which was
58. a little bit later than what he'd anticipated.

Because he used third person in referring to himself in the second preface (line 58), it served not only to open his story, but to connect it to the previous story. At this point Jan and I responded by encouraging him to continue (lines 59-62, and 64-66).

59. J: (draws in breath)
60. B: Yeah he was two hours late.
61. J: (laughs)
I
62. B: Ask him why.
I
63. R: Two?
64. B: At least two hours late.
65. Maybe later than that.
66. Where were you Rod?

In relating story entry devices to Wilson's theory of conversation, it can be said that the abstract or preface of a durable PEN serves as an out-mode from the conversation. At this point the audience still has the option not to take it up. Participants--not only the narrator but the audience as well--recognize a move from conversation to narrative and, therefore, begin to operate under rules distinct from those of conversation as a speech event.

In contrast, disposable stories have no abstract/preface at all, and, therefore, no out-mode from the conversation. This is exemplified by the fact that both Archie's Asthma Attack and another disposable story, Theatre Tickets, begin with the orientation section of the story. (See lines 7-8 in Archie and lines 16-19 in Theatre Tickets.)

Theatre Tickets

1. B: Friday night we went out.
2. We went to the community theatre
3. Damn Yankees.
4. D: Was it good?
5. B: Yeah.
6. I--I'm not
7. We won the tickets from Hall-Kimbrell
8. a season pass.
9. D: O:h
10. B: And
11. I was pleased but not thrilled because I don't
know if community theatres are ever worth
12. But I thought that this
13. really was fairly well done.
14. D: Mm hm.
15. B: Better than a lot of community theatres I've
seen.
16. R: We uh
17. Yeah Hall-Kimbrell throws a
18. beer bust the last Friday of every month
19. andd
20. D: No kidding.
21. R: they raffle off various things
22. D: Every month?
23. R: Yeah.
24. D: Wow!
25. R: Uh last month it was a uh
26. free flight for two to anywhere in the United
States.
27. D: Wow!
28. G: Oh wow.

29. R: Uh=
 30. B: Now that one I wanted to win.
 31. D: Yes!
 32. G: (chuckles)
 33. D: That's good!
 34. R: So
 35. and my department tends to win
 36. so uh
 37. the uh
 38. the guy that runs this show
 39. gets up there on Friday and says uh
 40. uh
 41. (louder voice) word has it Hofer has rigged the
 uh
 42. rigged the box again
 43. but we'll have our drawing
 44. uh for the two free season tickets to the
 Lawrence
 45. Community Theatre (puts hand in imaginary box
 as though to draw out ticket)
 46. Rod Hofer!
 47. (general laughter)
 48. G: Goodness
 49. D: Looks bad Rod
 50. Looks bad.
 51. R: It looked bad.
 52. (general laughter)
 53. D: Who got the uh
 54. the plane tickets?
 55. R: Jim Garvey
 56. one of the guys that works for me.

Until all of the participants realize that a narrative is underway, the narrative and the conversation overlap and the audience attempts to maintain a turn-taking pattern (lines 20, 22, 24, 27-28, 30-32). Wilson writes that in any interactive situation, it is possible for different speech events to overlap each other (1989: 55).

Like durable PENS, news stories may have abstracts that change speech events from conversation to narrative. However, there are important differences in the way the abstract fits into the conversation. First, it may be a response to a request for information from the audience, a very common way for news stories to enter a conversation. An example of this type of abstract occurred in lines 19-20 of The Shattered Windshield.

19. B: When did Edwardo and Sam come?
 20. R: Well Edwardo after they replaced the
 windshield in his airplane (no falling
 intonation)

A second way news stories are begun is with a question which serves as a pre-topic check, such as "Did I tell you I almost lost my coat in that Thai restaurant in Washington?" The function of a pre-topic check, according to Wilson, 'is to assess levels of shared knowledge on a particular subject before talk proceeds' (1989: 63). The check is accomplished through a question/answer pair; in the case of news stories, if the answer is positive, the conversation proceeds. If the answer is negative, however, the first person is likely to go on with a news story. For example, if the first person asks, "Did you hear that Ellen's car was stolen?", and the second person answers, "yes," then they will continue to discuss various aspects of the incident. On the other hand, if the second person says, "no," then the first speaker will explain when and how the car was stolen, and conversation will cease until the narrative is complete.

Although Rod does not ordinarily begin durable PENS with a pre-topic check, it is possible they may occasionally start with a question like, "Have I told you the story about how I almost got fired in New Orleans?" Discussing narrative-style jokes, Wilson (1989) writes that speakers use this kind of question opening when the probability is high that the second speaker has indeed heard the joke before. The same is probably true of durable PENS; because the narrator has told the story many times before, he wants to be sure he is not repeating himself to the same audience, a likely possibility. However, a question check before a durable PEN still must be related to the topic of conversation.

This brings up a final interesting feature of prefaces/abstracts before news stories; that is, they can be remarkably abrupt in contrast to the prefaces of durable PENS, which are carefully fit into the on-going talk. In telling news stories the narrator assumes that they will have relevance to the audience simply because of their currency. Under this assumption there is no need to connect the story to the preceding conversation at all, as in the following example where the story appears as a change of topic in line 6.

Excerpt from Meeting With the Boss

1. B: A Syrian orphan
2. makes his way to the United States and makes good.
3. /
4. B: But it starts out about a twelve-year-old boy.
5. /
6. R: Today uh
7. you know James
8. and Edwardo went over to talk to
9. Sanford about his numbers being all screwed
10. B: Mm hm
11. R: And they finally got Sanford to agree that our numbers were right and his numbers were wrong
12. and see what the situation was and so what we're saying is that there aren't extra people here to send out to the branches.
13. B: Mm hm
14. R: Fine.

The story Meeting with the Boss begins with only "Today,uh" (line 6) as a preface and it follows immediately after a conversation about a book I wanted my son to read. "Today" served as a sufficient preface to notify the audience that this would be a report of something that happened during the day. Thus, the preface to a news story can be a topic change, not related to the previous conversation at all. This is an important difference between the three types of stories. Because the narrator carefully prepares the way for durable PENS, they cannot abruptly change the topic like news stories can. The only way they could change the topic would be for the narrator to add a misplacement marker (Sacks and Schegloff 1974 cited in Young 1985: 139). This term was coined to label comments such as, "I know this is off the topic, but I've got to tell you this great story." Disposable PENS, on the other hand, do not change the topic but enter as a continuation of the topic, even when following a pause. In contrast, news stories frequently begin as topic changes.

The variations in means of story entry which I have described occur as a result of different purposes for telling the stories, as well as the number of times the story has been told and the consciousness of the narrator of the act of storytelling. Variations in other features can also be observed. For example, the interaction between audience and narrator is different

with each story type. There may also be differences in the orientation, evaluations, and codas. Clearly, all of these observations require further verification. It will be important to obtain data from other conversational storytellers in order to examine the similarities and differences among story types and their appearance in conversation.

APPENDIX I

FIGURE 1

Structural Analysis of a Durable PEN

New Year's Eve

Entrance Talk

Preface

56 R: uh
57 which was
58 a little bit later than what he'd anticipated

59 J: (draws in breath)
60 B: Yeah he was two hours late.
61 J: (laughs)
[
62 B: Ask him why.
[
63 R: Two?
64 B: At least two hours late.
65 Maybe later than that.
66 Where were you Red?

Invitation to continue

Result/Main Event

67 R: I was
68 passed out in the shower

Evaluation

69 J: (laughs)

[

70 B: (laughs)

71 R: Came to when I ran the hot water tank out of hot water

Evaluation

72 J: (laughs)

[

73 B: (laughs)

74 J: (laughs) This is the anniversary of that.

Orientation

75 R: No that was—that was New Year's Eve.

[

76 B: That was New Year's Eve.

77 R: Yeah it was New Year's.

78 J: Oh of course.

Evaluation

79 R: See what

80 and I figured it out

81 uh

82 I worked in the

83 warehouse

84 and so:

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	85	all of the
	86	uh
	87	not only people from the place that did—people from
		the
	88	complex that worked with the warehouse
	89	but also all the vendors would come through
	90	and they'd go
	91	and
	92	Americano!
	93	Come here come here!
	94	Drink drink! (tips back head with hand to mouth as
		though drinking a shot of whiskey)
	Evaluation	95 J: uh uh (softly)
Complicating action	96 R:	So I had a—a drink with each one of the vendors
	Evaluation	97 and they'd get me out of the back room
	98	and
	99	they're only getting one I'm getting one from each.
	100 J:	(laughs)
	101 R:	(laughs)
	102 J:	This is New Year's (telling intention)
Orientation	Evaluation	103 R: This is New Year's and
	104	uh
	105	you know by two o'clock
	106	which is when I quit—
	107 B:	Which is when he was supposed to meet me.
Repetition of Result	108 R:	I was totally plus—I was plus—
	Evaluation	109 J: And could have saved you.
	110 R:	I was plastered to the gills
	Evaluation	111 J: Oh my gosh (murmuring quietly)
	112 R:	and passed out in the shower (chuckles)
Coda	113 J:	Did you have to quit? (addressing question to B
		and returning to coda of previous story)

APPENDIX II

TRANSCRIPTION GUIDE

length of line	determined by breath pauses or phrasing of speaker
indented line	indicates there was no pause
=	absence of obligatory end pause

/	longer pause--enough for another speaker to have taken a turn
--	self-correction
capital letters at right margin	beginning of an utterance
.	downward intonation at the end of an utterance
?	upward intonation at the end of an utterance
()	editorial comments, unintelligible speech, or questionable hearings
[	simultaneous speech
underlined words	emphasis indicated by change in amplitude
: following a vowel	lengthened vowel
double consonant	lengthened consonant
Speakers:	
R	Rod, my husband
B	myself (stands for Berta, a shortened form of Roberta)

Other capital letters are the first initial of names of friends or family involved in conversations.

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